

TAIGYou're it!!**TAIG**You're it!!**TAIG ELECTIONS**You're it!!You're it!!**TAIG**You're it!!**TAIG**You're it!!

WILL BE HELD AT THE JUNE 30 MEETING. BELIEVE IT OR NOT. SO COME
PREPARED TO VOTE!
LET'S SUBMIT SOME ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER, OKAY?

JUNE 1985

TWIN CITIES ATARI INTEREST GROUP

PRESIDENT: PHIL SEIFERT VICE PRSIDENT: KEN HUIRAS
SECRETARY: MARK NEUMAN TREASURER: DICK JOHNSON
NEWSLETTER EDITORS: DAVE STENGEL, CORY JOHNSON

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s newsletters to reprint the material in this newsletter.

**TAIG**

Twin Cities Atari Interest Group
684 Queen Avenue South
Richfield, MN 55423

Next TAIG meeting:
Sunday June 30th, 1985
TAIG-----7:00 p.m.
at
St. Louis Park Rec. Center
5005 West 36th Street
St. Louis Park, MN.

ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD.

Next NAGS meeting:
Wednesday July 17th, 1985
NAGS-----6:30 p.m.
at
User Friendly Computers,
8465 Plaza Blvd.
Spring Lake Park, MN.

MEGAFONT][+

\$24.95 XLent software

This is a very powerfull series of printer utilities that allows your Epson, Prowriter, NEC, or compatible printer to do such diverse functions as dump graphics 7+78 files, including COMPACTED Micro-illustrator pictures, dump program listings (BASIC) with true inverse characters, and it also allows one to make his own character sets, in addition to the 15 supplied with the main program. After you have created a character set with a program like Create A Font (Analog magazine) you can combine 2 character sets. The following examples have been created with Megafont][+.

This is the GREEN font.

This is the ROMAN font.

This is a CURSIVE font.

This is the DATA font.

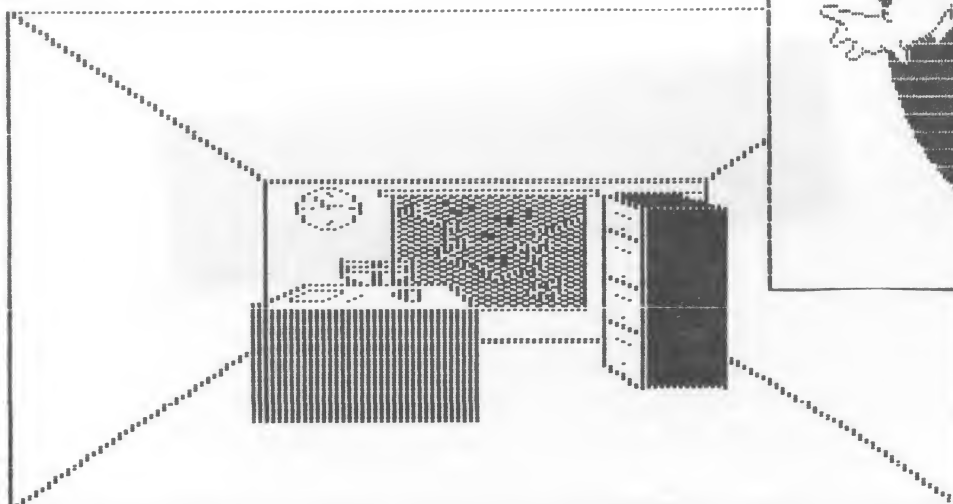
This is the ZEBRA font.

This is the OUTLINE font.

The Ghostbuster picture was drawn by Dave Stengel, and was dumped both in the normal eighth page mode and the inverse eighth page mode. In the office was dumped in the normal quarter page mode. Megafont will also print half and full page pictures, in inverse or normal with double or single struck characters.

The whole article was printed with the "Stop" font, which I thought would capture your attention, and the first font listed was greek. Megafont will also run the Gemini 10 and 10x, the Panasonic and the Riteman printers.

Megafont is a must for everyone who owns one of the above printers.



Beginners'
BASICS #3

by Bob Floyd

Well, here's the promised column on DOS, the disk operating system. Actually, I don't plan to talk about DOS too much, but why there is any DOS at all. First of all, the computer does not have more than just a rudimentary knowledge of communicating with a disk drive built into it. So, it is unable to access files, load programs, etc. by itself. This is where DOS comes in. Upon power-up, the computer loads DOS into memory. DOS is a program that tells the computer how to communicate with the disk drive in a more sophisticated manner. DOS organizes files on the disk in such a way that the computer can load programs, store and retrieve data, etc. in a consistent manner.

For those who don't know what a file is, it is simply like a folder full of information. It may contain a BASIC program, ATARIWRITER text information, data values, etc. It is just a place to store your information.

ATARI DOS 2.0 is the most common DOS in use on the ATARI. It is actually 2 files (or programs), DOS.SYS and DUP.SYS (for disk utility package). DOS is the main program and resides in computer memory after loading. DUP is the menu program for managing your files. Functions such as renaming, deleting and locking of files are performed from the menu. I won't go into the commands, except for a couple. You should consult a book such as Your ATARI Computer by Lon Poole for better explanations. Use option "O" to duplicate files. Option "C" (copy) is mainly for 2 or more disk drive systems. Option "J" (duplicate disk) copies the disk on a file-by-file basis. This is OK if all disk information is in files. In some

cases, such as boot-disks, some data will not be copied. For duplicating disks, I prefer using a "sector copier". This type of copying handles raw disk information whether it is in files or not. Ultracopy, from Soft Unlimited (Todd Burkey) is a good sector copier program. It has the same limitations as DOS in trying to copy protected programs, except those old schemes with bad sectors only.

Option "L" (binary load) is used to load machine language files such as those from ANALOG Magazine, etc. Option "N" (MEM.SAV) is not very useful. Normally when you go to DOS, any program in memory will be lost. If you have created MEM.SAV on your disk previously, the program will be stored in MEM.SAV before entering DOS. However, this causes a considerable wait when going to DOS, because your program must be saved first.

As you may have gathered, there are two types of disk organization, DOS and "boot". A boot disk does not normally contain DOS on it and probably never needs to access files of information. So, if you do a DOS "directory" command on a boot disk, you will either get "000 free sectors" or gibberish. There is a signal recorded on the disk that tells the ATARI (during power-up) whether to treat the disk as boot or DOS. If it is DOS, then DOS is loaded and AUTORUN.SYS, if present, is executed. (AUTORUN.SYS must be a machine language program). If it is a boot disk, the program will be loaded and run automatically. Disk storage is a little different, too, for boot disks, although I won't go into that here. This is a fairly simple explanation, but should suffice for most users.

Rantings and Ravings from the Prez

Oh where oh where have all the ST's gone? Oh where can they be? Latest

rumors has some being shipped to Europe, anybody flying over there to find out? One of the reasons given for not selling it here yet (besides the cynics saying it is not ready) is that they have not filled out all the paperwork with FCC regarding RFI. Uh huh, sure sounds familiar to me.

Expected delivery date on the machines here in our stores is now sometime late June or early July. And guess what? Mr. Tramiel has changed his mind about who he was going to allow to carry his precious machine. Now he is planning on letting the computer specialty stores sell a slightly upgrade version than what K-Mart and other mass merchandisers are going to sell. From what I have heard, the computer stores are getting a version of the machine that is upgradeable in memory to 1 megabyte of RAM. Also, they will only be selling bundled packages. You will receive a 512k ST, 1 500k 3 1/2" floppy drive, and a high resolution monitor for \$799, whoops, according to a certain distributor it is supposed to be \$899 for the package. Who knows anymore?

Did you all read the article by Dan Dorfman in the Minneapolis paper regarding suspicions about Commodore? Heh, I enjoyed every letter of it (except the part where he called Atari a literal basket case). It seems that he was on a talking relationship with Irving Gould who is the biggest owner of Commodore stock. Well, after the company lost 25 million last quarter, he was no longer talking to him. So, Mr. Dorfman did a little figuring. Hmm, Gould lost about 300 million dollars in stock value. Commodore's stock has gone downhill for a while. Does that sound familiar to you all? Dan Dorfman even mentioned the word <gasp>

bankruptcy. Of course, it was his considered opinion that Commodore is relying heavily on the future success of the Amiga to save the company, much the same way that Atari is relying on the ST's.

What are they up to at Apple? Laying off some people, closing down some production, Wozniak leaving the company. And I even heard that Jobs may sell out and leave the company so that would make it easier for AT&T to buy up Apple. Who knows? After all, these are just rumors, aren't they?

Now is the time for me to really start my ranting and raving. WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING IN THE CLUB? Now, I am not trying to be nasty about this, but, the club is a volunteer organization. All the officers of the club volunteered their time and effort to keep the club moving. From where I sit, it appears that many of you seem to be thinking "I paid my dues, so deliver something to me". I mean, it seems like the club owes you something without your giving anymore in return. BULLPUCKY! The club needs active participation from the members. That means volunteering for officer positions, writing newsletter articles, helping find things for the club to do and so on. I was deeply sorry about the response we had for officer nominations. Oh sure, there are some of you who in no way can devote the time (usually one night a month).

And of course, there are those who think they don't know enough about Atari's to be an officer and so on and so on and so on. Come on, people, you don't need to be a budding genius to help out in the group. It does not take brains to volunteer for president (maybe it takes brains not to volunteer?).

Personally, I don't think I have done a terrific job as president of the group. Maybe I should have had more events lined up and more activities and so forth. But, god damn it, it is difficult when it seems like you are getting no support from your members. Think on this for a while, for if you don't, the club may not be here for you to enjoy in the future.

Now, I would like to thank those of you who have volunteered your time and effort in the group. This includes Dick Johnson, Ken Huiras, Mark Neumann, Cory Johnson, Dave Stengel, Wayne Vassel, Ben Porter, the guys who help on the Analog and Antic disks. We need more people like you to support a group of this size. If I have forgotten anyone, my apologies and thanks.

One last thing that we have been hearing on the grapevines for a couple of months. We have heard that Atari is planning on selling some of the ST's through user groups around the country. Interesting idea, but, I have not heard anything from Atari officially on this and I know they have my mailing address. Atari is planning on an advertising campaign this fall to cost no less than 10% of the sales of the ST's over the summer. Too bad, and then Tramiel complains that sales of the XE have been disappointing so far. NO ONE KNOWS THEY ARE OUT! At User Friendly, all but one of the people that bought an XE already owned an Atari. I have a feeling the same thing might happen to the ST for a while, though not as bad as the XE.

Notes From the SYSOP by Dick Johnson

Henry Katzmarek will most likely be the first person in Minneapolis to own a 520 ST, being the only one to take advantage of ATARI's offer to the club. With any luck it will be here in time for the next meeting

and Henry has promised to bring it, if it arrives in time. Watch the BBS for a message on board 1.

We will soon be moving our BBS in order to keep it running on more of a regular schedule. Details will be published later and a notice will be left on the BBS.

I have added two Antic articles to the news letter. One a recap to the results of the June CES and the other about the new CDROM, which may be the most important new peripheral since the disk drive.

Lucasfilm has come up with two new games, Koronis Rift features a improved version of the landscape generator used in Rescue of Fractalus. In this game you start out with weak weapons and shields and must find treasure and return to buy improved equipment so that you can proceed further. Eidolon involves a search through a mapable cavern involving new animation techniques.

Haba Systems has announced a line of line of programs for the ST including HabaWord (a word processor), HabaFiles (Database system), HabaCalc N Graph, HabaCom (terminal program). It is important to note that Haba has written over 10 products for the Macintosh and shows that we will most likely be seeing many more Macintosh conversions in the future. Haba has also said they will be producing a 10 megabyte hard disk for \$499

In the area of Bad New MPP has gone bankrupt. It appears to be a case of trying to expand to fast. This is unfortunate as they did have good products for the ATARI. Hopefully their products will be picked up and supported by someone.

More Rumors: Commodore has licensed GEM for use on the Hyperion IBM PC-compatible which they have bought the rights to., Amiga will be out in a few weeks (100,000 by Christmas), It will cost \$2000, The ST will have 100 software titles by Sept.

More Ed Notes
by David Stengel

Well, I was just sitting around doing practically nothing, when I recieved no mail from the postman. Do you understand this? Neither do I...good we agree. Now, I have been asked to run for Secretary by two people. One is a friend of mine, the other person is the old Secretary himself. So, I decided I would run for Secretary. Anybody want to contend with me for this place in office? Do any of you care what in the hell happens to this little group of ours? Hardly anybody has run for any office position, and for some reason (mabey it is my bad eyesight) I see fewer and fewer people at the meetings, or so it seems.

We can always get articles, but staff members are another thing. So let's activate ourselves and get some nominees (or however you spell it) for some positions, huh? Okay. Now, that's out of the way, I would like to review a little program by the name of "Questprobe." This is a fairly new graphics adventure by Scott Adams, and it ain't a bad one at that. The graphics are pretty good, and the adventure is equally good. Though it can be confusing, not as confusing as "Hitchhiker's Guide", it is still fun to play. I would truely look to this game for a fair challenge. The puzzles are hard but solvable, and, of course, I'm always around to give you a hand (or foot) if you need it.

As always, if you have anything you want to ask us, we will be at the next meeting. There is no way you WON'T be able to identify us. I will be dressed-up like Joe Tourist (with the fishing hat, sunglasses, and loud shirt), and Cory will wear his "Atari Safari" hat. In short, we will look ridiculous so you can spot us. NOBODY ELSE BETTER DRESS

RIDICULOUS, because someone might go up to you thinking your one of the editors. Got it? (Especially you Josh!) Good. Well, see you at the next meeting. If you don't go for the excitement (heh), go to see how ridiculous we look. By the way, think of ideas to make the meetings more exciting, okay?

Ed Notes
by Cory Johnson

Wasn't the last meeting a bundle of kicks?

I am becoming increasingly concerned about the fate of the newsletter. I originally had credited the absence of articles to the change of editors or other factors. Since Dave and I have been editors, it has become glaringly apparant that the TAIG membership does not care about the content of the newsletter, the size of the newsletter, or the quality of the newsletter. In fact it seems that you don't care if there is a newsletter. Soon, this may be the case. Neither Dave or I can write the entire newsletter, nor should we have to.

Please submit your article to Dave or I at the meetings, one of us is always there, they can be mailed to us written or on a disk. Your disk will be returned to you at the next meeting. Atari Writer is the preferred word processor, but we also use Home-text and Speedscript.

Without your article, we will have to start shortening each newsletter, until we return to the cards. Neither of us wish this to happen, but you leave us no choice. We are starting to limit reprints from other newsletter and from Compu-serve. We would rather have a very thin newsletter, than to be a "mini-Antic," which is what we have become in recent months.

Election Night Update

Nominations...

President: Dick Johnson
Vice President: Jim Glish
Secretary: Dave Stengel
Treasurer:

We are all glad to see that so many of you are willing to volenteer your time for the benifit of the club. It appears that we have all of the new officers except a treasurer, any suggestions? Boy, these heated election races wear me out.

Broderbund

Rumor: If both TAIG and SPACE can meet on the same weekend, a Broderbund rep. may come and demo some of the newer stuff. Sounds more exiting than most meetings.

D.O.M.

This month's disk of the month will appeal to those of you who own either Atari Touch Tablets or Koala Pads, the disk contains a program written by SPACE's Bob Floyd called "Bear Essentials" which allows you to place scrolling text windows and rainbow colors on Micro illistrator pictures.

Your article, opinion, or advertisment could be appearing in this spot. Have you supported the newsletter or the club?

Special thanks to wizards work for advertising in TAIG again.





New... Epson's LX 90 printer

**Wizard's
Work** 

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—Repair Service Offered—

!! ATTENTION !!

10% discount on all regular priced
items for TAIG and SPACE members
at Wizards Work.

DOUBLE YOUR PLEASURE

Author Unknown

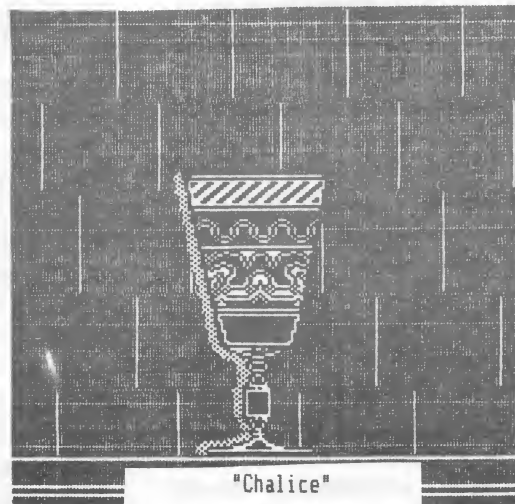
Phylis and Gordy Landsman

Reprinted from Computah, reprinted from
North Alabama Computer Society News-
letter.

Last week I decided to hook up a second monitor to my Atari, a green screen, primarily for word processing. Then, without changing anything, I could play games since the color and monochrome monitors would be hooked in parallel, displaying the same thing at the same time. Well, I booted my word processor and started typing out a letter. All of the sudden I couldn't believe my eyes. You see it turned out I made a mistake and hooked up the second monitor in series with the color monitor. Now I was looking at the text of my letter flowing from the green screen to the color monitor. Yes, I was looking at an 80 column display. Needless to say, I was totally awed with this fortuitious discovery. Well, I later put in the Pac-Man cartridge to see what would happen. There I was on the color monitor; the green screen was dark, but when I exited the left hand door to escape Blinky, I didn't go in the right hand door. No, the green screen to the left lit up a second Pac-Man maze, but there was a twist. The joystick directions were reversed. When I

pushed left, I went right. Those clever people at Atari! I later did some experimenting and found that by putting one monitor on top of the other and doing a slight circuit modification to put the vertical blank of the two out of phase, I could have 48 lines of text. Just think what I could do with 4 monitors. Come to think of it, just think of the possibilities with 2 printers...

(ed note) Interesting, if I take the 2 TV's I have hooked up to my 800..... I'd like to meet the author of this.



"Chalice"

by Peter Armstrong
drawn on the Koala Pad
and dumped with Megafont.

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CES WRAP-UP & COMMENTARY MEANING OF NEW ST CHANGES

By MIKE CIRAOLO, JACK POWELL

5/10- At the June Consumer Electronics Show Atari announced that two new ST models and a pioneering 500 megabyte ROM compact disk system would appear on dealer shelves in time for the Christmas rush.

Complete lines of integrated software for the ST were announced by three major developers. First programs from the new productivity series were to ship this fall from Haba, Batteries Included and Rising Star. Haba also promised ST owners a 10 megabyte hard disk for \$499 and a \$299 Hayes-compatible modem.

NEW ST MODELS Atari said that both new ST's will have 256K RAM of programmable memory. The 260ST will retail at \$399. The 260STD is to be \$499 and includes a built-in 3.5" disk drive. Otherwise they are identical with the 520ST except for the following:

- * GEM and the rest of the TOS operating software will be on ROM chips instead of on disk.

- * The television RF modulator is to be built-in.

- * The new 256K models won't ship till October or November.

520ST DEVELOPMENTS How is all this significantly different from the 520ST?

According to Atari Marketing VP James Copland, the first 2,000 U.S. units of the 520ST were already shipping in June to Atari users groups.

In July the 520ST would appear in computer specialty stores, and mass merchandiser distribution of the ST line would begin in the fall, Copland stated.

By June, the 520ST was already on computer store shelves in Canada and parts of Western Europe.

Price of the 520ST was set at \$799 and included a 3.5" disk drive, a high-resolution monochrome monitor, external RF modulator pack -- and GEM on disk, leaving 256K RAM in memory after loading GEM and TOS.

So all the 1985 ST's will now have no more than 256K of usable RAM...or will they?

ROM OR NOT? For pre-Xmas delivery, manufacturing must begin no later than September. The CES announcement of the 260ST and 260STD gave Atari all of June and July to make sure GEM and TOS were thoroughly debugged.

These newly announced 260 models will allow Atari to maintain credibility by meeting its pledge to ship the 520ST to US stores in early July. Disk updates could easily remedy any bugs found in the operating system of early 520ST's manufactured in May and June.

To Antic, the whole thing looks like a gutsy, clever move from Atari Chairman Jack Tramiel. Much of the U.S. business press unfortunately is computer-illiterate and reports even minor production delays as putting a company's entire future in doubt. Atari needed to bring an ST to market quickly as possible, even if in limited numbers.

Yet Tramiel had clearly learned a valuable lesson during his Commodore days, the glitchy Commodore 64 operating system that went into ROM sooner than it should. In the long run, rushing GEM and the ST operating system into chips before it was truly ready would create user problems and be bad business.

As this issue went to press, Atari had been issuing mixed signals about whether a 520ST GEM and operating system upgrade to ROM would be provided by the manufacturer.

Before and during CES, the company repeatedly said that the 520ST model would never have GEM and TOS in ROM. However, a June 7 message on CompuServe's SIG*Atari from a company spokesman quoted Atari president Sam Tramiel as saying the entire 520ST operating software would be made available on simple plug-in chips at

"nominal cost."

Of course, commercial 520ST software that doesn't use the GEM desktop can still draw on close to 400K of available RAM.

CD ROM The mind-boggling 500 megabyte CD ROM was the hottest thing at CES. It was displayed at the Atari booth by Activenture, which is developing the technology under contract with Atari.

Imagine a read-only disk that's identical to a compact audio digital disk, but which could contain 100 volumes of reference books with room left over. And the 100 volumes of information would be instantly accessible. Only three seconds were required for the 520ST and CD ROM to search a keyword through an entire 26-volume encyclopedia.

And CD ROM could handle virtually any type of data that can be digitally encoded -- video images, software, photographs, etc.

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CDROM June 3, 1985 by Michael
Ciraolo

Chicago, IL -- Imagine always having an encyclopedia available on your Atari, as readable as a conventional book, but as searchable as an industrial database.

Imagine, also, that you could search through 26-volume's worth of encyclopedia for term's such as "Costa Rica" and find 57 references in less than three seconds.

And imagine a \$500 price tag for this technology.

Such technology, under development by Activenture in an exclusive agreement with Atari, was demonstrated at Atari's CES booth today.

Called a CDROM, the technology includes a compact laser disk player connected to the direct memory access port (DMA) on an Atari ST, according to Activenture's engineering vice president Tom Pollander.

The CDROM can hold a half gigabyte of information (500 megabytes), although the encyclopedia demonstrated occupied only a quarter of the disk's actual space.

Rollander told ANTIC that independent publishers would announce specific products for use on the CDROM in the future, starting with the encyclopedia, and with more products introduced in the fall.

Atari officials would not name the exact price or release date of the CDROM, and said they were still discussing whether Activenture or Atari would distribute the product.

Rollander said the CDROM "would be available in the fall."

Using the CDROM, you can browse through text, exactly as you might with a hard-copy volume from an encyclopedia, using the mouse for control. You can move forward or backwards by page, choose individual volumes, chapters or entries and so on.

You can also specify any section of text for dumping to a printer, Rollander said.

Or you can search for specific words or phrases, using powerful techniques familiar to industrial database subscribers.

Specify a word or phrase and look for it in all of the text, in bibliographies, in tables, in subheadings, in specific entries, or in combination with other unspecified terms.

Regardless of the search you choose, the computer screen will tell you how many entries were retrieved and let you look at each one. In each case, the text is black on white, with red cursor control and green highlighting of the chosen word.

The amazing speed of the CDROM search is the product of previous indexing, said Rollander. In fact, the computer is not searching the text of the encyclopedia each time, but is searching a specially prepared index, which is larger than the actual text.

The full text of the encyclopedia occupies 58 megabytes, while the index structure takes up 60 megabytes.

"We've traded hours of processing

time on a VAX for the data storage capacity of the compact disk," explained Rollander.

His company took the magnetic storage tape used by typesetters and professional database suppliers and dumped an encyclopedia into a VAX computer.

Using the VAX, Activenture identified, indexed and cross-indexed 141,000 unique words in the text, producing a structure Rollander called "an inverted database".

The entire disk has a half gigabyte capacity, the same amount as 100,500 standard floppy disks, said Rollander.

THE INFORMATION AGE

Atari officials were ecstatic and called the CDROM "the most important innovation since home computers".

"This is what computers are all about," said one Atari marketing manager. "This will change everything. This is IT!"

Other reaction to the CDROM was mixed. In a crowd of distributors, retailers and members of the press, many people expressed their enthusiasm to ANTIC. Others were simply speechless.

"We asked ourselves 'What are most people doing with computers in the home?' They're using them as doorstops, playing games with them and eventually throwing them in the closet," said Rollander. "Now there's a real reason to use the machines."

"I expect resistance from many publishers, but eventually CDROMs will have greater market penetration than current encyclopedias," Rollander predicted.

Nor is optical storage/inverted database technology limited to encyclopedias. Rollander said the principle may be applied to cookbooks and airline guides, and that his company was talking to a variety of other publishers.

"I expect to see publications in the \$100 to \$150 range at first, dropping to \$50 in time," he said.

The cost of such optically stored databases is not high for two reasons:

Activenture's indexing procedure uses the magnetic tape already in common use by publishers, so computer input is simple, with most books already existing on tape.

Rollander also indicated that material stored on microfiche could easily be read, so databases of journals, the New York Times and out-of-print materials could be produced.

Then there's the technology of the compact laser disk. Mastering such a disk costs only a few thousand dollars, and the mass production cost is less than that of magnetic tapes and disks.

Because optical disks are mastered and pressed like records, there are no recording heads to wear out and no lengthy time spent making a recording, said Rollander.

INFOMANIACS DELIGHT

There is distinct pleasure in discovering all of the references to a particular word, references that you might never have found if you had simply looked up a primary entry.

For instance, Rollander demonstrated a search using the word "toothache". In addition to the expected references under dentistry, he also found mentions in connection with cloves, henbane and certain painful medical procedures developed during the Middle Ages.

The CDROM "gives students more appreciation for information than they get by simply looking up the subject," said Rollander.

(ANTIC Note: CDROMs are capable of storing object code (programs) as well as text. In the near future, exclusive Activenture interviews with ANTIC will reveal other potential types of CDROM-based information, such as videotapes, photographs, and software.)